

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Subregion: EAST **County:** INYO

Applicant: INYO COUNTY

Project Title: LOWER OWENS RIVER PROJECT RECREATIONAL USE PLAN

Reference Number: SNC 070321

PROJECT SCOPE

The project is the first phase in developing a Recreational Use Plan for the Lower Owens River Project (LORP), one of the largest river restoration efforts in the United States. Developing a Recreational Use Plan will provide a mechanism to comprehensively identify possible recreational uses and to evaluate them in relation to:

- Environmental objectives to protect the river and the surrounding natural resources;
- Community concerns that cultural resources and working landscapes be protected;
- Feasibility of implementation and maintenance of new programs and uses.

Phase I of this project will result in the completion of a draft Recreational Use Plan.

Steps necessary to accomplish Phase I include:

- Hiring a facilitator and plan writer;
- Preparing a Memorandum of Understanding for relevant parties to sign;
- Conducting stakeholder interviews to get input on recreational uses, impact concerns, and management questions;
- Conducting two technical review meetings to discuss recreational uses, integration of uses into management plans, and resource protection;
- Holding public workshops, stakeholder meetings/presentations to disseminate and discuss information gathered in stakeholder interviews and technical review meetings;
- Preparing a draft Recreational Use Plan that will include potential recreation uses on the LORP, possible enhancement to current recreation uses, identification of potential adverse impacts, and management requirements for recreation uses.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Hire a facilitator and plan writer	April- May 2008
Develop and sign MOUs	June 2008
Stakeholder interviews	July - September -2008
Technical review meetings	August & October 2008
Public workshops, stakeholder meetings/presentations	August – October 2008
Complete and submit 6 month progress report to SNC	October 2008
Preparing draft plan	November 2008
Final Report/Final Payment Request	January 30, 2009

PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Consultants (facilitator & plan writer, travel, lodging, mileage, per diem)	\$94,350
Printing & Postage	1,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$95,350

Letters of Support:

- The Conservation Fund
- Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
- Independence Chamber of Commerce
- Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the authorization of this grant for the revised amount of \$95,350. This request has been reduced from the original request of \$202,059 in order for this phase to proceed in this funding year given available funds.

2. PROEJCT SUMMARY

The County of Inyo is applying for a Proposition 84 Category 3 Strategic Opportunity Grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for the purpose of hiring consultants to assist in developing a Recreational Use Plan for the Lower Owens River Project (LORP). The Lower Owens River Project is the largest river restoration effort ever attempted in the western United States. The cost of the LORP Recreational Use Plan Project is \$246,153.

The Project consulting team will consist of a highly skilled facilitator and a writer with experience preparing recreation and access planning documents. The LORP has a long and complex history, and it is essential that the Project consultants be familiar with the constellation of agreements, court orders, environmental documents (including several resource management plans), and County planning documents (e.g., the County General Plan, Inyo County Bicycle Plan, etc.) that will directly or indirectly govern the recreational uses that can be considered in the LORP project area.

The Project consultants will conduct up to 60 individual and confidential interviews with stakeholders identified by the County and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), as well as self-selected from the general public. Based on these stakeholder interviews, the consultants will prepare an "Issues Report" that identifies and weights issues pertaining to recreational uses on the LORP.

A series of facilitated Public Workshops will be held in communities neighboring the LORP project area, to gather input regarding recreational uses on the LORP and review and comment on drafts of the LORP Recreational Use Plan. The consultants will need to balance diverse community interests and opinions on recreational uses on the LORP within a highly complex and structured legal framework governing maintenance of the LORP. The facilitated Public Workshops will be interspersed with meetings between the consultants and the stakeholder group (these meetings will also be open to the public) to share findings and ideas, as well as meetings between the consultants and staff from the County and LADWP to discuss technical issues. Ultimately, both the County Board of Supervisors and LADWP Board of Water and Power Commissioners must approve the Recreational Use Plan.

The consultants will develop the final Recreational Use Plan that potentially will include the following components:

- Identification of likely or potential recreational uses on the LORP
- Possible enhancements to recreational opportunities on the LORP
- Identification of potential adverse impacts of recreational uses
- Potential mitigations for adverse impacts
- Management requirements for LORP recreational uses